

43rd ASSEMBLY DISTRICT • ASSEMBLY DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS CHAIR

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## Jorgensen's Journal: Take Time to Care for Senior Citizens

September has arrived! For many that means the beginning of school, or that the leaves will be changing soon and fall is just around the corner. However, what many don't think about is senior centers.

Since 2007, September has been designated as Senior Center month by the National Institute of Senior Centers (NISC). National celebrations of senior centers first began in 1979 before gaining support and recognition. Senior Centers play an essential role in taking care of older citizens within our communities, doing their part to engage senior citizens both mentally and physically. Despite this, senior centers are often underappreciated for all of the good work they do for seniors.

Taking care of our seniors needs to be a priority, and making sure that the life-saving medication they need is affordable and easy for them to obtain is a big part of that. That is why I have supported and lead the fight for SeniorCare over the years as your state representative.

For those who are not familiar with SeniorCare, it is a wonderful program for Wisconsinites over the age of 65 that provides them with the prescription drugs that they need. SeniorCare has a simple enrollment process, a \$30 annual enrollment fee, income-based deductibles and co-payments as low as \$5 for generic medications. Many Wisconsin residents save hundreds of dollars each year through SeniorCare instead of enrolling in Medicare Part D. The State of Wisconsin has also been able to save taxpayers' money, because, unlike the federal government, SeniorCare can negotiate the lowest prices for prescription drugs. This bargaining process has been so effective that in 2009, the average cost to support a SeniorCare enrollee was less than half the cost of subsidizing a Part D participant.

SeniorCare helps older Wisconsinites meet their basic needs while saving them, and the taxpayers', money. That sounds like a win-win situation to me.

When I was first elected as a state representative, SeniorCare was under attack and was at risk of ending dead in its tracks. Wisconsinites spoke out against this threat and voiced their support of this life-saving program. Each time SeniorCare has been threatened,



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Wisconsinites have fought to save it, and I will continue to support them and do everything I can to see this program continue for years to come.

SeniorCare has been assisting older citizens since it was introduced as a 5 year demonstration project. It has been almost 14 years since then and SeniorCare is still helping thousands of seniors every year. A year ago, the program was extended even further, ensuring that it can continue to run and help seniors through December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018.

Taking care of our elders should be a priority, not a fight to be won. By supporting SeniorCare and senior centers, we can help older Wisconsinites live full, well balanced lives.

To learn more about SeniorCare or to sign up, visit www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/seniorcare or contact my Capitol office by calling (888) 534-0043 or emailing Rep.Jorgensen@legis.wisconsin.gov.

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